

The DREAM Program Board of Directors
Minutes of the Retreat
July 19, 2005

Present: Lisa Christie, Jan Backus, Brianna Dusseault, Mike Foote, Ed Willenbaker

Staff: Jon Potter, Mike Loner, David Anderson, Chad Butt, Jen Lazar, Lu Neuse

Absent: Sarah Siegel

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The annual Board retreat was held at Camp DREAM in Fletcher, VT. After board members got a brief tour of the new waterfront, Lisa Christie called the meeting to order at 10:30.

II. MANAGEMENT & COMPOSITION DISCUSSION

This discussion covered four topics.

Educating New Board Members

The Board will provide new members with a binder of introductory materials. It will ask new members to do the following within 3-4 months of joining the Board.

- Visit at least one program in action.
- Meet with the Board President or a designee.
- Attend a policy governance training, such as held by VANPO.
- Observe another Board that uses the Carver Model, if possible.
- Have lunch with the staff.

To stay current with DREAM, the Board will ask current Board members each year to

- Attend one to two programs and events to strengthen links to ownership.
- Prepare for policy discussions by bringing in outside experts to speak to the Board.
- Be involved with the stakeholder evaluations and feedback processes.

Electing New Officers

The Board decided to wait to elect new officers until the August meeting, when new Board members are present. They will apprentice under the current position holders until the November meeting.

Revising Board Meeting Formats

- From this meeting forward, the Board will hold monthly meetings in Burlington on weekdays.

- The Board suggested a new policy to be discussed at the next meeting regarding voting rules for decisions made over email and phone meetings. When the Board meets online or over the phone to discuss policy, changes to the policy should be made if there is a simple majority vote. The Board secretary will append a record of the email and phone votes in the next month's minutes.
- Mike Loner suggested that the Board continue to include a staff member on the Board once Mike Foote leaves, to serve as a natural liaison between Board and staff.

III. DISCUSSION OF BOARD PRIORITIES AND GOALS FOR 2005-2006

The Board had a short conversation about its priorities for next year before meeting with the staff to discuss their priorities.

Discussed Priorities for 05-06

- Develop more accurate Ends policy that reflects the aims of the organization
- Monitor this policy
- Strengthen Board link to ownership and including more staff input
- Understand, disseminate, employ the Theory of Change model

Discussed Goals for 05-06

- Broaden DREAM's name recognition
- Use stakeholder evaluation data more actively
- Follow up with older DREAM kids (and ex-DREAM kids) and consider making program changes to better address their needs
- Explore DREAM links to education
- Work with DREAM parents more closely/effectively

IV. DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES WITH THE STAFF

The Board met with staff members Jen Lazar, Chad Butt, Dave Anderson, and Lu Neuse to discuss their needs and priorities for the next year. Appendix I is their written description of the staff's top priorities.

Priorities discussed with the staff

- Stabilizing the current programs
- Encouraging and refreshing current programs so that they don't get stuck in a rut but continually generate new ideas around the social issues of their communities
- Building cross-program communication
- Expanding services to work more with teen DREAMers
- Articulating the DREAM program model and services offered (trainings, trips, etc.)
- Building "camp culture" among mentors and mentees

Monetary needs discussed with the staff

- Transportation for programs (vehicles)
- Storage
- Paying for a background check service
- Expanding staff capacity to have enough bandwidth for new projects
- Funding events that help programs work together
- Funding teen programming
- Expanding to new schools and/or holding exchanges with new schools
- Exploring the franchise model of expansion with Ben and Jerry's director

APPENDIX I

The BIG Priorities

This is what we've been talking about... "we" meaning Chad and Jen. We included the Camp culture bullet because we know that Dave and Lu talk about it a lot. But they'll be able to give you a better rundown on what they're thinking. After each bullet we put a small section on "Needs" these are things that fall into that kind of "Wish List" category. Let us know if you have questions or thoughts! – Jen and Chad

- **Strengthening Current Programs** – We've got 7 amazing programs and we're about to have 8! We're really excited to get every single one of them running at full speed... this includes having a critical mass of mentors/mentees, having a solid leadership structure in each organization, running effective kids programming, and making sure they're empowered and running their own show as much as possible! We feel like building collaboration between the programs and connecting mentors across the state will really add to the DREAM mentor experience!

Needs: A new, more efficient, background check and driver check system; another van or increased transportation (more along the lines of vans for the programs themselves. Not sure how this would work logistically, but just an idea); it would be great to find a way to cut down on staff's driving time – staff spends so much time and money driving (the DREAM monorail!); having money/resources specifically allocated to help with program recruiting (on-campus recruiting events);

- **Building a Camp Culture** – We want all of our kids not only to know of Camp DREAM, but to feel like it's a presence in their lives. Something that will always be there, and be theirs! Running WAC and summer camp will definitely give a structure to their yearlong camp experience, but DREAM on a whole needs to develop the "vibe" of camp. (Dave and Lu can share more thoughts on this!)

Needs: As Dave shared over lunch... Shower, Toilet, Structures... he'll be able to give you the best specifics...

- **Strengthening Program Model** – DREAM does an incredible amount of things to support its mentors. What we need to do now is get a firm grasp on what it is we do, how we do it, and how we can improve upon it. By mapping out the resources we currently provide our mentors, kids, and families we'll be able to see what needs further refinement and development. Core priorities in this for the next year include:

developing solid mentor training modules, refining and strengthening our DREAM family and LAB model, and building more accessible resources for mentors (for kid programming ideas, fundraising ideas, trip ideas...)

Needs:

- **Building the Bigger Picture** – As we are strengthening the pieces of what we do we also need to be paying attention to the whole picture of what DREAM is. The newly developed Theory of Change is a great orientation tool and our evaluations are providing really insightful data as to what DREAM is accomplishing.

Needs: